

Germans Penetrate Caillette Wood, Four Miles Outside Verdun

Driven Out From Part of Position by French in Immediate Counter-attack.

The Germans still are carrying on strong offensive operations northeast and northwest of Verdun. About four and one-half miles northeast, they penetrated the Caillette wood, just outside Fort Douaumont, after a violent bombardment.

From part of this wood, the French in an immediate counter-attack, drove back the invaders.

Another powerful attack was delivered against that portion of the Avocourt wood held by the French, but the French barrier fire and machine guns held the Germans without gains.

The French now have entirely evacuated Vaux, and have drawn their line south of the town, but in its immediate outskirts. Berlin says that northeast of Haumont, between Malancourt and Le Mort Homme, the Germans have entirely cleared the French from about 1,000 yards of trenches where they had remained since the German victory on the sector on March 25.

On other sectors about Verdun there have been only intermittent bombardments. Artillery duels have characterized the fighting along the remainder of the front.

Aircraft have been very active around Verdun. The French brought down three German machines, but Berlin says the aerial combats resulted in their favor.

Both sides have been busy working in dropping bombs on military establishments at various points.

Heavier activity than usual has been observed in the fighting between German and Russian in the region of Narva, where the Russian front line is being attacked.

Between the Somme and the Oise, the fighting was particularly active in the region of Perlevalle, Requescourt and Basseux, where German trenches were shattered by our fire.

West of the Meuse the Germans launched several powerful attacks on a corner of the Avocourt wood. All the assaults were repulsed by our machine guns and the fire of our machine guns.

East of the Meuse the action was very spirited throughout the day. The French of Douaumont and Vaux, after a bombardment of Caillette wood, with shells of heavy caliber, directed four simultaneous attacks with effectiveness of more than 100,000 shells.

South of the village of Douaumont, the French penetrated the Caillette wood, but our counter-attacks delivered immediately, drove them back to their original positions.

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THOUSANDS ARE SLAIN IN ATTACK ON VILLAGE

Germans Succeeded in Taking Remainder of Vaux, but Only at Enormous Cost.

FORT STILL HELD BY FRENCH

Expected That Crown Prince Will Hurl His Gray-Cloth Hosts Up Hill on Which It Stands, Regardless of Bloody Sacrifice.

BY C. F. HERTELLE.

PARIS, April 2.—Three weeks ago one of the bloodiest battles of the Verdun offensive gave the Germans the eastern end of the Vaux village, only a battered church separating the contending forces.

Yesterday morning another terrible effort resulted in the charge on the remaining houses, about forty of them, in the western part of Vaux.

The fort of Vaux, slightly to the southeast, is still strongly held by the French, and it is expected that during the coming week the crown prince will pour fresh hordes up the hill on which it stands, the slopes of which have been twice thickly carpeted with gray-clad corpses in previous efforts to capture the fort.

On my arrival at the barracks I was immediately taken to see the crew, whom I found in what is called the "kitchen" detention rooms, a sort of local military prison in which ordinary soldiers defaulters are detained for minor offenses.

The quarters are sparsely clean, well aired and spacious. I was given perfect freedom to inspect the cells in which the prisoners are quartered. Each room is about ten by six feet, and contains an iron bedstead with a mattress, two blankets and a pillow.

During the time of my visit rations similar to those given British soldiers in barracks were served out to the captured Zeppelin crew.

My interview with the men took place in the corridor, and the prisoners were brought out in pairs. They were all young men, varying in age between twenty and thirty, only one had suffered from a slight wound in his wrist, while another seemed to be suffering from the shock of immersion. The remainder were unharmed and were surprisingly cheerful.

Two mechanics still wore their leather clothing, but others, who had discarded their heavy apparel as the Zeppelin struck the water, were wearing woolen sleeping suits provided by the British soldiers who had effected the rescue and capture. A few were still barefooted, but during my visit the military tailor took the measurements for a full set for all the prisoners.

SATISFIED WITH TREATMENT FROM BRITISH OFFICIALS

Of the six I personally interrogated, every man expressed himself fairly satisfied with the treatment received from the British officials. It is significant to note that, despite the fact that I assured them that I represented a great neutral news service, each member of the crew with whom I talked asserted that his work was entirely unconnected with the Zeppelin machinery, and disclaimed any responsibility for dropping bombs.

Five out of the six denied having previously been on England on Zeppelin raids, but one stalwart Teuton, wearing only a shirt and leather breeches and leggings, frankly said that this was his third trip. All talked freely when assured that they were speaking to the representative of an American news service, and one laughingly remarked that he spoke but little English, which he had acquired on a short holiday trip to New York.

To the pertinent inquiry as to whether they were aware they had killed innocent noncombatants, women and children, each stoutly asserted that he was aware of nothing, save that he was obeying orders and doing as he had been told by superior officers.

It was obvious that they welcomed the chance to talk, but they volunteered no explanations other than giving plain answers to all my queries beyond a statement as to their general well-being and their treatment since their capture. In fact, they made it plain that they would say nothing that might incriminate themselves or be used against them.

On leaving the men's quarters, I was taken to the officers' apartments. The L-15 carried a crew of sixteen men and two officers. One man was drowned, but all the rest were captured. The commander was Lieutenant-Commander Bruthaupt, a tall, lithe, fair-haired officer, who told me he had learned to handle a Zeppelin since the outbreak of the war, though he had been an aviator prior to that time. Later I learned that, ironically enough, he was first taught to fly at the Hendon aerodrome, London's great flying school, where he obtained his pilot's certificate.

ALLOWED TO RETAIN HIS IRON CROSS

Commander Bruthaupt was taking tea in his room with a British army captain when I arrived. He was wearing the Iron Cross, which he had been allowed to retain. This mark of distinction bore a date coinciding with a memorable air raid on London, but the commander declined to say whether he had previously made the trip by Zeppelin to the British metropolis.

Both he and the second in command, Over-Lieutenant Kuhn, were quartered in two rooms in the officers' part of the barracks, sharing the sitting-room and bedroom between them. They are under the guard of an officer, and have a soldier orderly to attend them. They are given the same food as that supplied the British officers' mess, and also allowed a certain amount of freedom, as evidenced by the fact that, after the conclusion of the interview, I saw Bruthaupt, accompanied by a British chaplain, taking a walk around the barracks grounds.

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Make Zeppelin Raids Because So Ordered by Superior Officers

Men of L-15, Captured by British, Disclaim Responsibility for Death of Noncombatants.

BY GEORGE F. ALLISON.

CHATHAM, ENG., April 2.—By courtesy of the British War Office, I visited the military barracks here to-day, and for more than an hour conversed freely with the crew of the L-15, the German Zeppelin brought down off the coast of Kent by English fire during the raid of Friday night.

On my arrival at the barracks I was immediately taken to see the crew, whom I found in what is called the "kitchen" detention rooms, a sort of local military prison in which ordinary soldiers defaulters are detained for minor offenses.

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the position in which they find themselves. They are quite cheerful, too, assured me they had received most courteous treatment and all consideration from their captors.

FOUR STEAMERS SUNK BY MINES OR SUBMARINE

Only One Man Out of Crew of Fifteen on One Vessel Saved.

Three English and one Norwegian steamer have been sunk by submarine or mines. Two British boats, the *Achilles* and the *Ashburton*, were bound to London from Australian ports. The English steamer *Gold Mouth* was on voyage to London from Texas with a cargo of oil. The Norwegian boat was the *Hamre*, sunk while at anchor. Of the crew of fifteen, only one man escaped.

Four of the crew of the *Achilles* were missing, two of the crew of the *Gold Mouth* were wounded when landed, and five of the *Ashburton's* crew were taken to a hospital suffering from shrapnel wounds.

DESTROYED BY SHRAPNEL SHELLS OF SUBMARINE

LONDON, April 2.—The British steamship *Ashburton* has been sunk by shrapnel shells fired by a German submarine. Five members of the crew have been taken to the hospital. The vessel, according to the Exchange Telegraph Company, was not armed.

The *Ashburton* sailed from New Zealand on February 23, and was last reported as leaving Montevideo, Uruguay, on March 1. The vessel was 4,415 tons gross and was built in 1905 for the Australian Steamship Company, of London. She was 332 feet long, 51 feet beam and twenty-six feet deep.

MEMBERS OF CREW LANDED AT PENZANCE

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ONE SOLE SURVIVOR OF CREW OF FIFTEEN

LONDON, April 2.—Lloyd's reports that the Norwegian steamship *Peter Hamre* was sunk on Saturday night while at anchor. One man, the sole survivor of the crew of fifteen, has been landed from the Kentish Knock lightship.

LONDON, April 2.—The British liner *Achilles* was sunk on Friday. Four members of her crew are missing. The captain and sixty-two other persons from the steamer have been landed.

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